

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 AF-10 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11

INR-10 LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 SAJ-01 DODE-00

PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-03 NIC-01 DRC-01 AID-20 /125 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9380

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

EUCOM

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 04356

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, UK

SUBJECT: EUR-AF LABOR ATTACHE CONFERENCE: SEARCH FOR
A NEW US STRATEGY

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: THE EMBASSY LABOR ATTACHE BELIEVES

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THAT A CENTRAL CONCERN OF MANY LABOR ATTACHES IS THE

LIKELIHOOD THAT A RECONSTRUCTED, ALL-EMBRACING WORLD TRADE UNION ORGANIZATION WILL BE BUILT WITHIN THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS IN WHICH SOVIET INFLUENCE WILL BE OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE AND IN WHICH, CONVERSELY, US INTERESTS WILL FIND DIMINISHING OPPORTUNITY FOR EXPRESSION. THIS DEVELOPMENT, MOREOVER, IS TAKING PLACE IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY CLEAR, OVERT US POLICY OR STRATEGY WHICH COULD, IF NOT PREVENT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THIS NEW "POPULAR FRONT" OF WORLD LABOR, PERHAPS, AT LEAST, MITIGATE ITS MORE DAMAGING EFFECTS TO OUR INTERESTS. END SUMMARY

2. THE ADVANCES MADE BY SOVIET TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS AMONG THE UNIONS OF WESTERN EUROPE ARE NOW WELL KNOWN. SOVIET TRADE UNION REPRESENTATIVES HAVE ACHIEVED MUCH FOR SOVIET INTERESTS DURING THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS, FOR WHICH VERY LITTLE HAS BEEN GIVEN IN RETURN. FIRSTLY, THERE HAS BEEN A PROLIFERATION OF BILATERAL CONTACTS BETWEEN UNIONS IN EASTERN AND WESTERN EUROPE DURING THE LAST DECADE OR SO, FOR WHICH NO DEMOCRATIC UNIONS IN WESTERN EUROPE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE ANY SERIOUS DEMOCRATIZATION OF TRADE UNION STRUCTURES - ONE OF THE MAJOR STATED AIMS OF THEIR POLICY. SECONDLY, THE SOVIETS HAVE SUCCEEDED IN ESTABLISHING A PATTERN OF "EAST-WEST" CONFERENCES WHICH CAN HARDLY REMAIN POLITICALLY NEUTRAL GATHERINGS ON TECHNICAL SUBJECTS AS SOME TRADE UNIONS IN WESTERN EUROPE, PARTICULARLY THE GERMAN DGB, HOPE. THIRDLY, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE EUROPEAN TRADE UNION MOVEMENT, ALREADY WELL UNDER WAY, WHICH WILL SOON INVOLVE AN OPENING TO COMMUNIST TRADE UNIONS IN WESTERN EUROPE, CAN ONLY BE A RELATIVELY SHORT STEP TOWARD ADMISSION OF EASTERN EUROPEAN UNIONS AND THEN - QUITE LOGICALLY -- A NEW TRADE UNION INTERNATIONAL -- WFTU STYLE, CIRCA 1945-1949.

3. THE MIDDLE 40'S, OF COURSE, ARE CLEARLY NOT THE MIDDLE 70'S, AND WE ARE AWARE THAT THE SEARCH FOR DETENTE IS A CORNERSTONE OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY. HOWEVER, THIS SHOULD NOT OBSCURE THE FACT THAT, AS IN THE EARLIER PERIOD, SO IN THE PRESENT, THE SOVIETS HAVE

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USED INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATIONS AND TRADE UNIONS IN ORDER TO ADVANCE OFFICIAL SOVIET INTERESTS. THEY WILL SURELY CONTINUE TO DO SO, DESPITE , RATHER THAN BECAUSE OF DETENTE. IF THEY OBTAIN, MOREOVER, AN INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK IN WHICH TO OPERATE, THE SUCCESS OF THEIR EFFORTS WILL BE ENORMOUSLY ENHANCED.

4. THE ABSENCE OF THE AFL-CIO FROM THE ICFTU VERY

MUCH COMPLICATES THE PROBLEM, BUT THERE APPEARS ALMOST NO LIKELIHOOD THAT IT WILL REAFFILIATE TO THAT ORGANIZATION IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. THE PARTICIPATION OF AFL-CIO AFFILIATES IN THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE SECRETARIATS IS VITAL AND IMPORTANT AND SHOULD BE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED. BUT THESE TRADE SECRETARIATS, WITH THEIR CONCENTRATION ON "ECONOMIC" TRADE UNIONISM, AND BECAUSE OF OTHER IMPEDIMENTS, DO NOT PROVIDE AN ADEQUATE SUBSTITUTE -- IN POLITICAL TERMS -- FOR THE BROADER UMBRELLA TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS LIKE THE ICFTU.

5. WHILE THE LEADERSHIP GROUPS OF EUROPEAN TRADE UNIONS ARE APPEARING TO BE MOVING INEXORABLY IN SUPPORT OF A GDS

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 LONDON 04356

NEW WORLD-WIDE TRADE UNION STRUCTURE, THERE OF COURSE
REMAIN SOME LEADERS IN THE UK (AND IN EVERY COUNTRY,
FOR THAT MATTER) WHO ARE WORRIED ABOUT THE FUTURE SHAPE
OF EUROPEAN TRADE UNIONISM, AND ABOUT THE GREAT CHASM
BETWEEN BRITISH AND AMERICAN TRADE UNION VIEWS -- AT
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THE VERY MOMENT WHEN MANY LEADERS OF THE LABOR GOVERN-
MENT ARE PROCLAIMING IN ORCHESTRATION THE IMPORTANCE OF
CLOSE TIES WITH THE US. WE SHOULD CONSIDER TO WHAT
EXTENT WE CAN AND SHOULD ENCOURAGE THIS MORE REALISTIC
TREND IN THE VARIOUS CAPITALS TO WHICH WE ARE ACCREDITED.

6. THE EMBASSY LABOR ATTACHE BELIEVES THAT THE TUNIS
CONFERENCE MUST REALLY FOCUS ON THE CENTRAL ISSUE WE
HAVE OUTLINED WHICH HAS RAMIFICATIONS FOR US POLICY NOT
ONLY IN WESTERN EUROPE, BUT THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. WE
MUST ASK OURSELVES THE QUESTION OF WHETHER WE MUST
REMAIN PASSIVE IN THE FACE OF THESE CHANGES OR WHETHER
WE CAN MITIGATE OR INFLUENCE THE SITUATION IN ANY WAY.
IN ANY EVENT, A COHERENT SET OF POLICY GUIDELINES FROM
WASHINGTON IS NOW MORE ESSENTIAL THAN EVER. AT TUNIS,
AN OPPORTUNITY EXISTS TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE ELEMENTS OF
A NEW STRATEGY TO DEAL WITH THESE FAST-BREAKING
DEVELOPMENTS IN THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION MOVEMENT.

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